7:Munro & Seligman D. E-4. 5 (ca. 1900-1942) 1963
AB6 Ainu AB6

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VARIOUS RITES

Hunting

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BEFORE the Japanese administration, hunting and fishing were the main Ainu occupations, and even now protection and success must be sought by prayers to Kamui Fuchi and the three other '*pase*' *kamui*, Nusa-koro Kamui, Shiramba Kamui and Hash-inau-uk Kamui, before starting on any hunting or fishing expedition. It was formerly the custom, while hunting, to carry one of the skulls stuffed with curled shavings known as *shiratki kamui*, often that of a 'good' fox. They were thought to render the hunter invisible to evil spirits taking the form of wicked bears (*wen-yuk*). The *ramat* in the skull was supposed to see well and to throw dust in the eyes of evil spirits or in some other way to blind them temporarily.

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The quiver for the poisoned arrows was believed to embody considerable *ramat*. Hunters used to carry a stick resembling a libation wand with an ancestral mark incised on it. This was a means of identifying the owner and betokened that he was under the protection of the ancestral spirits. It was said that this stick was often strapped to the hunting bag, in which case a bear tally stick (*iso-pishka-ni*), with a notch for each bear killed, was tied to the quiver.

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If a hunter without a spear was threatened by a wicked bear, as distinguished from a genuine mountain deity willing to provide meat, he would embrace a tree and implore Shiramba Kamui to save him. Living elders say that this was effectual and that a thank-

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532 explain their ritual significance. However, Montandon's calling them "sticks for libation" also does not reveal the original function of these mysterious objects.

532 224 •211 171 It is interesting to compare the ikunisi with the pictographic drawings on wooden boards by the shore Chukchee and with the Eskimo carvings on objects made of bone. The Chukchee and the Eskimo use these objects - the former for the commemoration of the results of a successful hunt (representing the killed animals and the actual scenes from the hunt), the latter for "the invocation of the forces of Nature producing food." Were not the ikunisi also basically commemoration plaques on which were marked the number of animals killed in a hunt and the circumstances under which the killing was accomplished? It is typical that almost all "ikunisi" generally have simple notches (varying in number) cut in at the end of the sticks. Also encountered are sticks having only notches, with neither representations nor ornament on them.

532 In spite of the astonishing variety of the artistic variations, the Ainu ornamentation stubbornly preserves its original motives. The various phases of the artistic development of these motives help to trace out and discover their material and ideological base. The investigators who have studied the Ainu art have [114] various explanations of the content and origin of the Ainu ornamentation. In the works of Shurts, Laufer, Montandon, and especially in those of Shternberg one may come across interesting observations and hypotheses, although in some cases (Shurts and Montandon) these are not always well founded. Since in the present article I have no opportunity to analyse all the basic motives of the Ainu ornamentation described by these authors or discovered by us I shall dwell only on two, which in our opinion are most frequently encountered. Such basic motives are a string woven of bast or some other material and the twisting and interweaving snakes. (7) The motives developed on

[113] 7. The development of the form of the Ainu ornamentation from